ΑΝΑΛΥΣΙΣ.

THE

Loosing of St. Peters Bands;

Setting forth

The true Sense and Solution

OF THE

COVENANT

In point of

CONSCIENCE

SO FAR

As it relates to the Government of the Church by *EPISCOPACY.*

By *JOHN GAUDEN*, D. D.

Acts 16.26. *The foundations of the Prison were shaken, the doors opened, and every ones bands were loosed.*

1 Tim. 1.5. *Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.*

Non est conscientia sine scientia; nec pura esse potest, si sit cæca. *Bern.*

LONDON,

Printed by *J. Best*, for *Andrew Crook*, at the Green-Dragon in St. *Pauls* Church-yard. 1660.

TO

His honoured Friend

Sir Lawrence Brumfeild Kt.

And Colonel in *London*.

SIR,

WEll knowing (as St. *Bernard* ſpeaks) how tender and delicate a thing Conſcience is; how it is not to be baffled or deluded with any *Sophiſtry*; nor raviſhed or captivated by any *violence* and *tyranny*; not *cajoled* or *trepanned* by any *Policy* and *hypocriſie*; but (apart from all fraud or force) it is then moſt at its eaſe, *freedom* and *tranquillity*, when it hath moſt light and ſerenity to ſee its duty, alſo moſt *liberty* to act according to thoſe rules of right Reaſon and Religion, which are not partial, flexible and mutable, but *univerſal*, *fixed* and *eternal*. The tenderneſs of conſcience.

§. I have here endeavored to give you and others (upon your motion) that ſober ſence of the Covenant, whereof I beleive it is only capable before The rules of Conſcience.

God, before all good *Christians*, and in a mans own *wel-informed conscience.*

§. Which must, and at last will judge of things in point of *scruple* or *obligation*, not by the *occasion* beginning them, or the *power* imposing them, or the *passion* clamoring, or the *multitude* applauding, or the *success* abetting, or the *pertinacy* maintaining them; Nor yet by the *superstition* of some men devoutly doting for a while upon that as a goddess or an *Image faln* from heaven, when it may be (indeed) but the late invention of some *cunning work-men*, whose golden rings and *ear-rings* being melted in the *furnace* of Civil wars, may sometimes bring forth such a thing as the Authors and Abettors will needs vote to be their God.

§. But the true light and medium of Conscience as to its *judgement*, *practice*, peace and *perseverance*, must be by those clear, pregnant and constant *beams* of right Reason, aad true Religion, which shine in the *brightness* and stability of *Divine* and *Humane laws*, which are the solid pillars of Truth, the firm *supports* of duty, the *sure bounds* of obedience, and the safe *repose* of conscience.

§. All other *superstructures* of *fancy*, *policy* and *Interest*, as *hay*, *straw* and *stubble* will perish; but those others will out last the last *conflagrations* which shall make a *fiery trial* of all mens thoughts, *designs and actions* both publick and private, whether they be made up of *popular* and *peevish dross*, or of such *piety*, more precious than gold, which is both pure and *permanent.*

§. In this great concern therefore of conscience, I must

must ſtudy to be void of all *fear* and *flattery* of men, ſeparate from all *crowds* of paſſions and prejudices, free from popular *petitions*, and the two Houſes reſolutions; from Scottiſh *importunities* and Engliſh *compliances*; not obnoxious to the *Court* or the *Country*, to the Aſſembly or the High-Commiſſion, to *Epiſcopal infirmities*, or *Presbyterian inſolencies*; but as in the preſence of God, and before his *Tribunal*, ſo ſerious, intent, upright and unbyaſſed ſhall I declare my judgement to you, to your City, to my Country, and to our moſt *welcome King*; to my reverend *Fathers*, and brethren of the *Clergie*, and to my dear *Mother the Church of England*, for whoſe ſake nothing muſt ſeem hard, or too much to be done or ſuffered by me, or any of *her Sons*, ſince we have the great paterns, both of our late Soveraign, who ſuffered as a Martyr in her *defence*, and of our bleſſed *Saviour*, who was crucified for her redemption.

Freedom from paſſion and prejudice in caſes of conſcience.

§. As for my Brethren of the Church of *Scotland*, I confeſs I underſtand not their *motions* or *mutations*, becauſe I think they once enjoyed the beſt *conſtitutions* of *Epiſcopacy* in the world; I have a Chriſtian pity and charity for them; I leave them to that *liberty* which is the fruit not of the ſwords and paſſions of man, but of the *Word and Spirit of God*; which clearly unites *Loyalty* and *Religion*, *Duty* and *Devotion*, *Reformation and Moderation*, *Order* and *counſel*, *eminency* and *harmony* in one *paternal*, *fraternal* and *filial unity* of Biſhops, Presbyters and People.

§. As to the ſcruple or *caſe of conſcience* then, with

The shineſs of some mens conſciences as to Epiſcopacy.

with which you tell me, many ſober and honeſt men, are by their once taking the *Covenant* ſo ſcared from all *complyings* with any *Church Government* under any name of *Biſhops*, or notion of *Epiſcopacy*, never ſo reformed and regulated, that they fear by looking back to the *primitive*, *Catholick* and *univerſal Government* of this and all other antient Churches, to be turned into *pillars of Apoſtacy* as *Lots* wife, was into a pillar of ſalt. And to prevent which ſad *Metamorphoſis* in City and Country, my *Anſwer* or *Reſolution* in point of Conſcience as to the *Covenant*, ſo far as it relates to *Epiſcopacy* is this.

Anſwers oblique.

1. The Covenants defectiveneſs as to authority and law.

Firſt, I might ſhrewdly batter the *Covenant*, by urging the defectiveneſs of, and ſo the invalidity of any *lawful*, *conſtant* or *compleat authority* in it, capable to bind the Subjects or People of *England*, either in the Court of conſcience, or any other (*Eccleſiaſtical* or *civil*) *Judicature*; in which nothing can have any permanent *bond* or *tye of Law* (except Gods Word) without the *Kings conſent*, no more than the vow of a *ſervant*, or *ſon*, a *daughter* or *wife* (in *Moſes* Law) could bind them without, yea, againſt the declared *conſent* of their *Maſter*, *father* or *Husband*, under whoſe protection they were.

Numb. 30. 2.

2 The violence of the times.

Secondly, I might eccho and retort upon the *Covenant*, the *violence* and *noiſe* of thoſe *times* in which it was firſt hatched in *England*, and brought forth by the *Midwifery* of *tumults and Armies*, of *engaged*, yea *enraged parties and factions*, whoſe *wrath and policies* were not probbale to *work the righte-*

ouſneſs

ouſneſs of God; nor did they ſeem good Angels, which troubled our waters to *an healing*, but evil ones ſent in Gods juſt anger amongſt us *to turn our waters into blood.*

Thirdly, I might further urge the *novelty* and *partiality* of the *Covenant*, as the *Engliſh Laws* and *genius*; that it was from a *foraign influence* and *deſign* firſt invented, then obtruded on this Church and State, *contrary* to our *antient Laws* and *conſtitutions* both *eccleſiaſtical and civil*, to which *King* and *People* were bound, till by mutual *conſent* they were *altered*; which was never yet done in the *point of Epiſcopacy.* 3. The novelty of it as to our laws.

Fourthly, It might ſeem *odious* to reflect upon this *Covenant*, as to the ſad effects, and unbleſt *conſequents*, which like black *ſhadows* have attended its *appearing* and *prevailing* in *England*, and in *Scotland* too. What *havocks* followed in Church and State? what *improſperities*, *diſorders*, *contempts*, *confuſions*, *wars*, *ſpoils*, and *bloodſhed* upon all eſtates and degrees; beſides the *contempt of Religion*, the *neglect of Sacraments*, the *expulſion of the Liturgie*, and the *aviling*, no leſs than *dividing* of *Miniſters*, who (inſtead of *Okes* and *cedars* of God, formerly frequent in this Church, I mean Divines of *great gravity* and *excellent learning*, *worthy of double honor*) everywhere ſhrunk and dwindled to *Plebeian ſhrubs*, and *popular paraſities*, the pitty of the more pious, and ſcorn of the more petulant ſort of men. 4. The ſad and tragique conſequences of it

Fifthly, Nor will I inſiſt upon the *bafflings* of the *Covenant*, before it was adult or many years old; how 5. The baflings and annullings of it by counterengagements.

how it was ſoon made *Nehuſtan*, and reduced to *nothing*, by *counter and croſs engagements*, after it had ſerved as one of the great rocks for the *Kings ſhipwrack*, no leſs than the Churches and States; nor did the *Covenant* ever thrive after it was *watered* with the *Kings blood*, wherein many men had an hand who had been *zealous Covenanters*, If it was ſo eaſily vacated in point of its *expreſs loyalty* for the *Kings Preſervation*, I do not ſee how it ſhould be ſo binding in the caſe of *abjuring* or *extirpating* of all *Epiſcopacy*, though reformed and regulated as it ought to be.

6. 'ts variating from, if not croſſing former lawful Oathes of King and people.

Sixthly, Wherein it is very conſiderable how the *Covenant* (if ſo interpreted) muſt needs grate ſore upon, and pierce to the very quick thoſe former *lawful oathes*, which had prepoſſeſſed the *ſouls* and *conſciences* of moſt of us in *England*; not only of Subjects, as thoſe of *Allegiance* and *Supremacy*, beſides that of *Miniſterial*, *canonical obedience* to our *lawful ſuperiors* in Church and State; but even the *conſcience* of the *late King*, as he was bound by his *Oath at his Coronation* to preſerve the rights and franchiſes of the Church; which the *King* rather than break, as ſome men urged him, choſe to *die* and loſe all *in this world*; as he declared to many at the *Iſle of Wight*; and to Mr. *Marſhal* with others, at *Newcaſtle*; from which Oaths, as we know no *abſolution*, ſo, nor can there be any *ſuperfetation* of ſuch a *contradictory Vow and covenant* without *apparent perjury*, which we preſume the *Covenant* never intended, nor included; or if it did, it is therein of no *bond* or *validity*, as to any good

mans

mans conſcience againſt *previous lawful oaths*, which muſt be kept.

Seventhly, Beſides, if the *Covenant* were deſigned, as wilfully excluſive and *totally abjuring* of all *Epiſcopal order and Government* in this Church of *England*, it muſt needs run us upon a *great rock* not only of *Novelty* but of *Schiſm*, and daſh us both in opinion and *practice* againſt the *judgement* and *cuſtom* of the *Catholick Church*, in all places and ages (till of later years) from the Apoſtles days, with whom we ought to keep *communion* in all things of ſo antient *tradition*, and *univerſal obſervation*; nor may we ſo comply with a few *reformed Churches* of *later daies* (whoſe *want* but not *contempt* of *Biſhops* alſo the neceſſity of times, and *diſtreſs of affairs* put upon them, either by the *policies* of *Princes*, or the impatience and *prejudice* of *people*, or the *covetouſneſs* and *ſacriledge* of both may excuſe, while they approve and venerate *Epiſcopacy* in others) yet with theſe we muſt not ſo comply, as to put a reproach, ſcandal, ſcruple or affront upon all other Chriſtian Churches at this day in all the world; among whom, not one ever was of old, or is to this day in any Kingdom to be found without their Biſhops, as derived by the *ſucceſſion* of all times from the *Apoſtles*; nor is the aboliſhing of *Epiſcopacy* a ſmall wall of *partition* newly ſet up to keep all *Papiſts* from due Reformation.

7, *It threatens dangerous Schiſm.*

Eighthly, I might further add, how much more *equal* and *ingenuous*, *loyal*, and *religious* were it for all ſober-meaning *Covenanters* to *reduce* and *confine*

8, *The beſt ſenſe and rule of the Covenant.*

 their

their conſciences, as well as their *Covenant*, from ſuch an extravagant, diſloyal, unlawfull, enormious, and Schiſmatical ſenſe, to which ſome do wreſt and torture it (in which it could neither be *lawfully taken*, nor can be kept with honeſty, as againſt all *Epiſcopacy*) and rather to retire to that ſober ſenſe wherein alone it might *lawfully* be taken, if it had been impoſed by due *authority*, or were *ſpontaneouſly aſſumed*, which ſenſe can reach no further than thoſe abuſive *exceſſes* or *defects of Church Government* under Biſhops, ſo far as they were *really* ſuch, either by the inconvenience of the *conſtitutions* and cuſtoms in *England*, or at leaſt as they appeared ſuch to theſe Covenanters, as to the execution of that *authority*, through the *faults* or *infirmities* of ſome *Biſhops* and their inſtruments, who poſſibly were not ſo *worthy* and *good*, or not ſo *wiſe* and *diſcreet*, as became *Chriſtian Biſhops*, or *Eccleſiaſtical Governors* of Chriſts Church. But it is a moſt *irreligious*, as well as unreaſonable (*Ametry*) tranſport, for men to *covenant* againſt all the right uſe of *things that are good*, becauſe of the abuſe incident to them, by men or times that may be evil.

9. Its pretended authority from examples in the O. Teſt.

9. Ninethly, It were eaſie to level to the ground all thoſe fair but fallacious *pretences* drawn to *juſtifie* the *Covenant*, from *Scripture examples*, wherein the *Jews* ſometimes ſolemnly renewed their *Covenant with God*; But it was that expreſs *Covenant* which God himſelf had firſt made with them in *Horeb* and Mount *Sina*, punctually preſcribed by God to *Moſes*, and by *Moſes* (as their *ſupream Governor* or King) impoſed upon them; this they ſome-

time

time *renewed* after they had broken it by their apoſtacy to *falſe* and *ſtrange gods*: But bleſſed be God, this was not the caſe of the Church or people of *England*, nor was there any need of ſuch *covenanting*, any more then there was any *Moſes*, or *Hezekiah*, or *Joſiah*, or any chief Governor commanding it: Nor (alas) was this *Covenant* any divine dictate or Soveraign *preſcription*, but the petty *compoſition* of a few politick men, *Subjects* not *Princes*, and very *mean Subjects too* ſome of them, either as *Lawyers* or *Miniſters*, a great part of whom I and others well knew to be no very great Clerks or Stateſmen; and fitter for a *country Cure*, than to contrive and compoſe *Solemn Leagues* and *Covenants*, to be impoſed upon *Churches* and *Kingdoms*, (yea, and upon their *Kings* too) in whoſe Dominions were many thouſands equals and Superiors to thoſe Maſters, whoſe heads rather than their hearts, and their State correſpondencies more than their conſciences brought forth this *Covenant*.

Laſtly, I might truly alledge againſt the *novelty of the Covenant* in the Church of *England*, that there is no *precept* or *patern* for any ſuch in all the *New Teſtament*, nor in all *ſucceeding ages* of the Chriſtian Church; we never read nor heard of any *covenanting* Chriſtians (until the *Ligue ſainte* in *France*) except thoſe who in one baptiſm were ſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt, and ſo entred into that *covenant* which God makes *with us* and *we with him*, in that holy *laver of regeneration*; this is the *new* and Evangelical *covenant* of all true Chriſtians; this *we break* by *wilful* and *preſumptuous ſins*; this *we renew*

10. No evangelical example of any ſuch Covenant in any Chriſtian Church of old.

by *true repentance*, and by worthy *participation* of the *body* and *blood of Christ* in the *Sacrament of the Lords Supper*.

§. How vastly different from this sacred covenant, this late piece of *policy* more than *piety* is; and how little the true *covenant* of a Christian binds him by his *Baptism* or *Repentance*, or the *Eucharist* against all Episcopal Government, I leave to all *sober-minded* Christians to judge; since both the power of ordaining Ministers, and by them to consecrate and celebrate both *Sacraments*, was ever derived from and by *Bishops of the Church*, as the cheif *conservators*, *cisterns*, and *conduits* of all Ecclesiastical *Authority* and Ministerial power from the very Apostles, the first Bishops of the Church, *Acts* 1. who had the same *immediately* from Christ, who was, and ever is the great *Bishop* and *Pastor* of our souls, to feed and rule his *Church*, not only by his *Word* and *Spirit*, but by such *Shepherds* and *Rulers* as he hath in all *ages* set over his *flock*; of which *Bishops* were ever esteemed the Angels, Presidents, or cheif Fathers; whom utterly to *destroy*, and violently to *extirpate* out of this or any Christian Church, is not only to offer signal and intolerable *injuries* to the persons of such excellent *Bishops* as *England* lately had, and still may have, but further mightily to abate the honor of this whole Church, and its Ministry, by taking away all the rewards and *encouragements* of *Learning* and *Religion*; yea and to scandalize all Churches by abolishing such a venerable order and universal *custom* in the Church, as hath no *origine* but that of the *Apostles*, and looks

very

very like an immediate *institution* of *Christ*, either preceptive and explicite, or tacite and exemplary.

The just abatements of Covenanters heats and rigors.

5. So that if this were the *sense* and intent of the *Covenant-makers*, and *takers*, to *extirpate* and *abolish*, not the *abuses*, but the very *uses* of all *Episcopal Order* and *Government*, the great *Boanerges* who thunder out so much terror against *Covenant-breaking*, may do much more justice and execution if they turn the mouths of their canons against such *Covenant-taking*, which is better broken than kept in any *unlawful sense*, and best of all, when not at all taken, with any such intention, which is as presumptuous, as it was preposterous.

6. These things being thus premised, are sufficient (as I conceive) to abate the edge and rigor of the *Covenant*, as to its antipathy against all *Episcopacy*, and to ravel that *cable* or bond of *religious obligation*, which some men do seem to twist and urge upon poor *peoples* consciences in that point; when in *good earnest*, there is neither *Law of God* or *man* requiring, imposing or comprobating any such Covenant, by any National or Ecclesiastical authority; so that it appears (at best) to be but a matter of *will worship*, of humane and private invention, void of *publique* and plenary *injunction*, esteemed by many but as a *stratagem of State*, a *flag of faction*, an *engine* framed on purpose to *batter down Episcopacy*, and the whole *Church of England*, in order to obtain the *spoils* of them; not to *punish* and *amend* the evil that might be in Episcopal Government, or in some *Bishops* and other *Ministers*, but to seize all their *estates*, and all the *patrimony* of the

the *Church*, to the great enriching of ſome *ſacrilegious Proteſtants*, to the gratifying of ſome Preſbyters envy and revenge, but moſt of all to the *great joy* and triumph of the *Romiſh party* and Jeſuitick deſigns, which were thought by many wiſe men to have been, if not theS ires, yet the Sibs to that Covenant; that they might help to ſpread it as a ſnare in *Mizpeh*, thereby to catch and deſtroy the *famouſeſt Biſhops*, the moſt *renowned* C*lergie*, the beſt reformed and moſt flouriſhing C*hurch* in all the world.

The beſt aſpect of the Covenant conſidered in conſcience.

§. But I will look upon this Covenant in the *ſofteſt ſenſe* that can be made of it, as a *voluntary Vow*, or *religious Bond* which *private men*, and ſome *part only of the Nation*, ſpontaneouſly took upon themſelves, in order to declare their ſenſe of duty to *God*, the *King*, the C*hurch*, their C*ountry*, and the *Reformed Religion*, to make themſelves more *ſtrictly* ſenſible of the ſacred and *civil obligations* reſpectively due to them, that ſo they might be more ready to *diſcharge them* in their places and *callings* by taking ſuch a C*ovenant* freely, not for fear of *priſon*, *plunder*, *ſequeſtration*, and the like *wracks* of mens ſouls; the terrors of which made many, if not moſt of the *takers* of the Covenant, to take it; and yet I believe not one fourth part of the people of *England* now living ever did take it in any ſort; and very few but rigid *Bigots* and *virulent ſpirits* in any ſenſe, againſt *primitive*, *reformed*, and *regular Epiſcopacy*, ſo reduced to an efficacious *conjuction* with *Presbytery*, as the moſt Reverend Primate of *Armagh* propoſed in his *Reduction* of late,

late, and so did the Lord *Virulam* long before in his considerations touching the Church of *England*, offered to King *James* in the beginning of his reign.

§. In this aspect of the Covenant, as a religious *obligation*, either *newly made* or *renewed* upon the soul of any that *willingly* and freely took it, and who thereby think themselves eternally obliged to *fulfill* the *letter of it*, or that sense they had of it as to the matter of Church-government by *Episcopacy* or *Prelacy*, which they fancied to have abjured and renounced, no less than *Popery*; my *Answers* and *Solutions* are these: Answers direct.

First, They are not the bare *words* of the *Covenant* which as *charms* can bind any *mans conscience*, to or against any thing; but it is that force of *Truth*, *Reason*, *Justice*, *Religion* and *Duty* to God, or man, our selves or others which morally and really obligeth men, either by Gods general or particular precepts; which are as iron or admantine bands on every mans soul, to chuse good and do it, to hate evil and eschew it, long before any of these *withes* or *cords* of mans combining and tying are put upon them, by themselves or others. 1. What only can bind in it,

Secondly, Nor can any such Covenant bind any man in any *consciencious bond*, meerly by the power of a mans own *imagination*, or by such a prejudice and *presumption* as he lists to *form* and take up against any thing, short of, or beyond the *merit* of it, either as *good* or *evil*. 2. Not the takers fancy or imposers.

Thirdly,

3. It cannot bind to the injury of others.

Thirdly, No such Covenant can bind us to the *injury* of anothers liberty, *right*, *power*, or *lawful authority*, private or publick; and so not against that which is in the King and the *Bishops*, or in the *major part* of the Church or of the Country, or of any *Parliament*, which may look upon *Bishops* and *Episcopacy* with a far more *propitious eye* than those that beheld it only through the *Presbyterian spectacles*.

4. It cannot bind either to evil, or from good.

Fourthly, Such a Covenant can bind no man in conscience against any thing that is in its nature *good*, or that is not *morally evil*; for this were for man to *bind himself* and others beyond Gods *eternal bonds* of *righteousness*: They are Covenants with *Hell* and *Death* which bind men either to what is *evil* and sinful in its *nature*, or from what is allowed of God as *good* and *lawful*, yea and may be necessary in its time and *place*; now there is no doubt, but there is *much good* in *Episcopal order* and *government*; *much good* was done by it to the Churches of Christ in the primitive and *all times*; much to this Church of *England* since the *Reformation* and before; the *principles* and *proportions* of order, subordination and government (which hold good in *all other polities*, and *fraternities*) cannot be evil in this of Episcopacy; It hath much of God in it, from *Scriptural precepts* and *patterns* in the *Jewish Church*, which the Christians followed in many things; It hath so much of Christs example, and the *Apostolick constitution*, of the *primitive use*, of Ecclesiastical custom, of holy mens general approbation, and universal imitation, both here in *England*

land and elſewhere, that it were extreme folly, madneſs, prophaneſs and blaſphemy to *cry it down* for evil, or to engage and *covenant* againſt it as ſuch, when it hath in it ſo *much good*, and ſo *atteſted* by experience, to be beneficial for the *well-being*, yea almoſt for the compleat and *regular being* of any *Church*, and none more than this of *England*, where people are not to be governed by their equals and inferiours, becauſe they are in black cotes.

Fifthly, No man may *vow or covenant*, much leſs keep any ſuch Covenant as he hath taken *intentionally* againſt the *evil* or *corruption* and abuſe of any thing, ſo as to *involve the good* and *uſefulneſs* of it, and to condem that to *deſtruction* or *extirpation* with the other, as *Abraham* ſaid to the Lord, *God forbid that the Judge of all the earth ſhould deſtroy the righteous with the wicked*; *or caſt the wheat with the chaff into inquenchable fire*: No, a good conſcience abhors *confuſion*; it doth not take or do things by *whole-ſale* but by *retail*, *weighs all in the ballance of the Sanctuary*, *ſeparates the precious from the vile*; the *ſuperſtructures* of men, from the *foundations* of Chriſt and his *Apoſtles*, which ſtood firm for ſo *many ages*; it becomes the children of wiſdom to juſtifie her, by trying all things, and holding faſt what is good.

5 It cannot oblige to extirpate the uſe of what is good, becauſe of any abuſe,

Sixthly, As they that *covenanted* againſt *Popery*, cannot think they did *abjure*, or muſt *abhor* all thoſe *ſaving truths* and *duties of Chriſtianity* which are mixed with *Popery*; no more can they juſtly think becauſe they *covenanted* againſt *Prelacy*, that is, a-

6 It obligeth not to aboliſh allthat is good or chriſtian mixed with Popery.

gainſt its *pride*, *preſumption*, *idleneſs*, *covetouſneſs* and *tyranny*, that therefore they are for ever *engaged* againſt the *order*, *preſidency* and *paternal authority* of *Epiſcopacy*; mens malice and hatred may not go beyond *the grave*; if the *abuſes* and diſorders in *Prelatick Government* be *dead* and *buried*, true *Epiſcopacy* may yet have a bleſſed *reſurrection* from *corruption* to *incorruption*, from *diſhonor* to *honor*, which I hope and pray God will by the wiſdom of the King and his Parliament effect.

It cannot bind to any thing out of a mans lawful power.

Seventhly, No man may lawfully *vow* and *covenant*, or accordingly act in any thing, which is not in his *power* and *diſpoſe*, in his *ſphear* and *calling*, beyond which *bounds* this *Covenant permits no man to go*; yea, it doth limit by theſe all his *engagement* and *activity*. Now certainly, the government of the Church of *England*, eſpecially as *eſtabliſhed by Law*, neither was nor is in any *private mens power*, be they never ſo many, either to *alter*, or *innovate*, or *aboliſh* and *extirpate*; This is only in the power of the *King* as *Supream*, by the Law of God and the Land, to protect and preſerve: Nor can it be changed but by his *royal aſſent* to the *counſel* and *deſire of the Two Houſes of Parliament*: Nor may any man never ſo much for *Presbytery*, or *Independency*, or *Anarchy*, as to his private opinion, either *vow or covenant*, or act overtly and violently, further than by *humble petition* or counſel againſt eſtabliſhed and *legal Epiſcopacy*, no more than he may againſt *Monarchy*, becauſe he prefers either *Ariſtocracy* or *Democracy*.

Eighthly, As no man could lawfully *covenant* against what he thinks to be good, or against what is *leſs good* then he deſires and opines, but out of his *calling* and lawful power *to effect*; ſo, nor can any man in conſcience be bound by any ſuch *Covenant* (taken in a *groſs ſenſe*, or in *general terms*) againſt that which may upon *ſecond thoughts*, or *after-view*, and better information appear to be *good and uſeful to him*; he is here bound not to keep his *Covenant*, in the *latitude* of his *miſtakes* and *preſumptions*, nor to act according to his *prejudices* and former *ſuppoſals*, but rather to retract his *raſhneſs* and *unadviſedneſs* in taking it at firſt, and to act according to the *preſent evidence* of what is *true*, *juſt*, *good*, *lawful* and *uſeful*, even in *Epiſcopacy*, whereof he cannot but ſtand convinced, both by the principles of *right reaſon*, and the *proportions of all Government*, and by the experience of the *defects*, *deformities* and *inconſiſtencies* of all other models.

It cannot bind againſt what may after appear good.

§. It is now high time, after ſo many *afflictions* to learn *righteouſneſs* and *wiſdom*; and to diſcern between the *faults of men* or *times*; and the true *nature of things*; between *good and bad Biſhops*; between *pontifical Prelacy*, *and Paternal Epiſcopacy*, which is that wherewith all ſober men *would be ſatisfied*, and againſt which no *Covenanter* could in *Reaſon* or *Religion*, in *piety* or *policy*, in prudence or conſcience be engaged.

Ninethly, The *cautious* and *conſciencious Covenanter* therefore is now to take a calmer *view* and

The duty of a cautious and conſciencious Covenanter.

exacter measure of the *Covenant* than (perhaps) he did at the first *offer* and *taking of it*, which was in haste, and heat, in fear and fury; what then he *greedily swallowed without chewing*, he should now *leisurely* and *soberly ruminate*; for in *lumps* it will not easily *digest* or *pass*; he may better learn what there is of God or good in it by the *still voyce*, wherein now the Lords mercy appears and speaks to this *Church* and *Kingdom*, than in those *fires* and *earthquakes*, which at first represented this *Covenant* to him with *shining swords*.

5. He must now distinguish what may be in it *of God*, what of *good and well-meaning-men*, and what of *evil* or *siniſter* designs, at least as to the *event*; in what is good he may lawfully *persevere*; what may by some be urged to evil, he is to avoid; what he did weakly or *inconsiderately* in the *taking* or *pursuing* of it, he is to repent of and *retract*, by keeping in the *bounds* of duty, *allegiance* and subjection to God and his *Superiors* in *Church* and *State*.

10. The ease satisfaction of any conscientious Covenanter.

Tenthly, and lastly, the most strict and severe *Covenanter* cannot but be satisfied and absolved in point of conscience, if first he hath and still doth in his place and calling *seasonably advise*, *humbly petition*, and *lawfully endeavour* to reform what is truly amiss in the *Church Government* by *Bishops*. Secondly, If he use the like *means* to restore and preserve, what he finds *good* and *useful* in Episcopacy. Thirdly, If he humbly submit to what the King in this point as *Supream* shall see fit to establish in his Church; which,

which is very *probable* to be such, as will much differ from the former *way of Government*, as to any thing evil or inconvenient in it: Certainly, a little *change* realy to the better, much more an honest and ingenuous *Reformation* of Episcopacy, beyond the former excessive or defective either constitution or execution of it, will abundantly absolve the *honest*, yea and the very litteral and complexive meaning of that *Covenant*; which may not be a *bond of iniquity*, or a *snare* and *gin* for schism and sedition to *act by*, to the *dishonor of God*, to the *reproach* of the *Reformed Religion*, to the scandal of *foraign Churches*, and to the ruine of these sometimes so *famous* and *flourishing*; which the *King* and every good *Subject* are bound in conscience to repair and restore, not only to, but (if it may be) beyond its *pristine* condition; wherein some things possibly were so amiss that it will be happy to have them either supplied as to the *defects*, or repressed as to the *excesses*, without any extirpation of what is holy and catholick, primitive and paternal, orderly, politick and prudent in Episcopacy; which *Government* duly fitted and fixed, comprehends beyond any, all the *just interests of People* and *Presbyters*, no less than of the *Bishops* and of the *King*.

Reformed Episcopacy consistent with the Covenant.

5. This *Right*, *Justice* and *Duty* then every conscientious *Covenanter* ows,

The duty and just dealing of a honest Covenanter.

1. To *God*, in approving, desiring, loving, and using what is good.

2. To the *King*, as the chief Governour of the Church and State, enjoyning *things lawful* and

and *honeſt*, though not the very beſt.

3. To the *Biſhops* and *Fathers* of the Church, who have been many of them moſt injuriouſly uſed *many years*, and ought in Juſtice to be recompenced.

4. To all *learned* and *ſober Miniſters*, who have a long time been expoſed to all manner of diſcouraging and dividing *factions* among themſelves, and inſolencies from the people, for want of *King* and *Biſhop* to govern, guide and protect them.

5. He *ows* this love, moderation and charity to this *Church*, hereby to advance and ſettle the *unity*, *peace* and proſperity of it, which cannot be but in the way of Epiſcopacy duly conſtituted, and carefully executed.

Laſtly, he ows this care to his *own ſoul*, whoſe *inward* and *eternal* peace is not to be made up by *paſſion*, *ſuperſtition* or *preſumption*, but by *meekneſs of wiſdom*, *juſtice*, *charity* and diſcretion; as in all other things, ſo very much in this point of Epiſcopacy; ſo ſtudiouſly then put into the *Covenant* to ſerve a prevalent *intereſt*, but no way in conſcience to be now ſtretched againſt a right and regular Epiſcopacy, no more than *Phyſick* given to cure a diſeaſe, ſhould like unmortified *Quick-ſilver*, be applied to kill the man.

The ſenſe which the prime authors of the Covenant gave of it.

5. This I know was the ſenſe of the moſt learned men in the Aſſembly, and of thoſe, who *with my ſelf* had as much right to ſit *among them*, as any others, but were not permitted, either by popular faction and tumult, or by other ſhufflings and reaſons

of

of State which took care to exclude or deter all the excellent *Biſhops of the Church*, and the moſt able of Epiſcopal *Divines*, for fear there ſhould have been any juſt *plea* for *moderate Epiſcopacy*, againſt the then *Magiſtery* of *Presbytery*. This I have oft heard Mr. *Marſhal* and others affirm (who had a great hand in *penning* and *promoting* the *Covenant*) and they owned it to ſome foraign Divines, That the Covenant was levelled only at the (*Deſpoticum, Tyrannicum, regimen*) *miſgovernment* not the *Government* of *Epiſcopacy*. This is at preſent the ſenſe and hopes of the moſt learned and godly *Presbyterians*, whom I have lately ſpoken with in *London* and *elſewhere*; That if the ancient *lapſed* and *decayed frame* of Epiſcopal government were a little altered, it would ſatisfie the end *and letter of the Covenant*, which was not to deſtroy, but to build, and repair, not to *conſume all*, but to uſe thoſe *materials* which were good in that *antient, noble, and venerable fabrick of Epiſcopacy*.

§. Which I beſeech God may by his *Majeſties piety* and *wiſdom* be *ſpeedily and reſolutely ſetled* in its beſt *conſtitution*; wherein to take good counſel is Kingly and *Chriſtian*; but to tarry till all *ſects* and ſorts of people be agreed and *ſatisfied*, will be to expoſe his *Royal Authority* to *undervaluings*, and this Church to *everlaſting confuſions*. The ſpeedy ſettling this Church in a Epiſcopacy.

§. Nor doth there need much *counſel* to know, or *courage* for to do, what is here meet to be done,

done, in order to ſatisfie the moſt, and I may ſay the *beſt* of all ſorts in this *Kingdom*, both as to *minds*, *manners*, and *eſtates*. For his Majeſty hath not a *new Church* to build, but an antient and well-modelled one to reſtore: They are not *foundations* of faith or *good manners*, which are to be laid, but either ſome *neceſſary reparations* to be made in reference to ſuch decays, as long time brings upon the beſt things under heaven; or ſuch *pinacles* be taken down as being much waſted with age, rather *threaten* than *adorn* the Church of Chriſt; whoſe *dilapidations*, after all the covenanting complements and reformings have been ten times more in theſe laſt twenty years under the hands of *bungling Reformers* (who would needs do Church-work without the Maſter-builders, Kings and Biſhops) than they were for *fourſcore years* ſince the *Reformation* in *England*, yea, or the firſt *Four hundred years* of the Church, in the *midſt of Perſecution*; when many godly Biſhops were perſecuted by Heathens and Hereticks; but this *Age* is the firſt *Parent* of that *Prodigie*, wherein *Orthodox* and *Reformed Chriſtians*, either *Presbyters* or *People* did *perſecute godly Biſhops*, (of the ſame *Faith* and *Profeſſion*) yea, and Epiſcopacy it ſelfe, though never ſo regular and reformed; which could not juſtly be the meaning of the Covenant; and if it were, it cannot thereby bind any man that took it, further than to *repent* of his *raſhneſs*, and to act contrary to ſo injurious, irreligious, irrational and impolitick a

The ruines of this Church the laſt 20 years for want of Epiſcopacy.

ſenſe

ſenſe. From which ſnare the Lord doth undoubtedly deliver every good mans conſcience; for as God cannot *tempt*; ſo nor can any thing in his name tye or bind men to any thing that is a ſin: They that under any ſuch ſiniſter notions and unjuſt ends lifted up *one of their hands* to the moſt high God, to *prophane his holy Name*, had need bend both their *knees* and lift up both their *hands* to Heaven humbly to beg of God *pardon* for their folly, and grace to return to that duty which they owe to God, to the King, to the *Biſhops*, to his *Church*, to their *Country*, and to their *Conſciences*.

§. Thus (Sir,) have I in two days finiſhed my *anſwer* and *Solutions*, as to the bondage and ſcruple of the Covenant in the caſe of *Epiſcopacy*, wherein I hove freely ſet down my moſt impartial ſenſe and thoughts of it, being willing to *reconcile it* to Reaſon and Religion, as far as may be; beyond which it can have no *juſt influence*, *power*, or *efficacy* upon any *mans conſcience*: Nor would I have it ſo *accurſed of God*, (though as yet it hath been no *Procurer* of any great bleſſings to us in the Church) as to be made the *Jeſuitick wedge* to keep us ever from *cloſing with* a right Epiſcopacy. Doubtleſs the ſenſe of the Covenant hath lately quickned many mens conſciences in their *Allegiance to the King*, ſo as to bring him (as *David*) home with infinite joy and triumph; Nor do I deſpair but it may be applied ſo (as in Truth and Juſtice Concluſion.

it ought) for the recovery and reſtauration of the Church of *England* to ſuch an happy *Order*, *Unity*, and *Government*, as is moſt deſired by all good *Biſhops*, by all grave *Presbyters*, and by all gracious *People*, who have *zeal* according to *knowledge*, and are not like a *Taylors Gooſe* very *heavy* and *hot*, but *blind* and *dark*; apter to ſcortch and oppreſs, then to enlighten and direct themſelves or others.

Farwell.

June 12. 1660.

FINIS.

Books written by Dr. *Gauden*, and sold by *Andrew Crook*, at the green Dragon in St. *Pauls* Church-yard.

1. *Hieraspistes*, A Defence for the *Ministry* and *Ministers* of the Church of *England*.

2. Three Sermons preached on publick occasions.

3. *Funerals* made *Cordials*, in a Sermon preached at the Interment of the Corps of *Robert Rich*, Heir apparent to the Earldom of *Warwick*.

4. A sermon preached at the Funeral of Dr. *Ralph Brounrig* Bishop of *Exceter* (*Decemb.* 17. 1659.) with an account of his *Life and Death*.

5. A *Petitionary Remonstrance* in the behalf of many thousand Ministers and Scholars.

Κακοῦργοι, *sive Medicastri*, Slight healers of publique hurts, set forth in a Sermon Preached in St. *Pauls* Church, *London*, before the right honorable Lord Mayor, Lord General, Aldermen, Common-Council, & Companies of the honorable City of *London*, *Febr.* 28. 1659. being a day of Solemn thanksgiving unto God, for restoring the Secluded Members of Parliament to the house of Commons, (And for preserving the City) as a Door of Hope thereby opened to the fulness and freedom of future Parliaments: The most probable means under God for healing the Hurts, and recovering the health of these three Brittish Kingdoms.

Μεγαλεια Θεοῦ, Gods great Demonstrations and Demands of Justice, Mercy and Humility, set forth in a Sermon preached before the Honorable House of Commons, at their Solemn Fast, before their first sitting, *April* 30. 1660.

90439